

COVID-19 Planning Tips for Preschool Graduation Ceremonies

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Layered guidance documents

Large Events

- **Primary:** [Guidance for the Prevention of COVID-19 Transmission for Commencement / Graduation Ceremonies](#)
- **Secondary:** [CDPH Outdoor Seated Live Events and Performances Guidance](#)
- [Blueprint for a Safer Economy Activity and Business Tiers](#)
 - Includes an addendum on *tested and fully vaccinated individuals and sections* that can be added to the above.
- [COVID-19 Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People](#)
 - Includes guidance that has been incorporated into the above documents.
 - These recommendations **do not apply to employees**.
- [COVID-19 INDUSTRY GUIDANCE: Private Venues and Events](#)
 - Must be used for receptions
 - May be a simpler alternative for smaller graduation or promotion ceremonies

Small Events

Across all Tiers:

- **Limited occupancy capacity** based on tier, venue size and physical distancing.
- Attendance must be **limited to a pre-determined attendee list**.
- Workers participating in **routine weekly testing or showing proof of full vaccination are NOT counted** toward any occupancy capacity limit.
 - All workers not participating in a routine weekly testing program or not fully vaccinated shall count toward any occupancy limit.
- Use of **face coverings is mandatory unless actively eating and/or drinking**.
 - **Guests who do not comply should be removed** from the event immediately.
 - Allow for exemptions identified in the CDPH Face Covering Guidance.
- Entry and exit should be controlled to **prevent concentrations of people**.

- **Assigned seating is required. You must maintain a guest list.**
 - Physical distancing of **at least 6 feet between people from different households.**
 - People who are **fully vaccinated do not need to be 6 feet apart** but must be 6 feet from others who are not members of their household and are not fully vaccinated.
- Minimum of **two hours between events** to prevent mixing.
- **Maintain physical distancing** between vendors, event workers and attendees at all times.
 - Photographers should use lenses that allow for physical distancing.
- **Live entertainment must follow** all relevant guidance for
 - [Outdoor Seated Live Events and Performances Guidance](#), or
 - [Indoor Seated Live Events and Performances](#).
- If providing food and drink **self-service is not allowed.**
 - All guests must **maintain physical distancing** and face coverings.
 - Event attendees and workers are only permitted to **eat and drink at designated areas.**
- Refer to CDPH Travel Advisory for all guests and attendees.

Purple – Outdoor Only

- Limit of 25 attendees
- If all attendees show proof of negative test or full vaccination, then a maximum of 100 people.
- Attendance limits include all staff and volunteers working at the event.

Red

- Outdoor:
 - Attendance limited to a maximum of 50 people.
 - If all attendees show proof of negative test or full vaccination, then a maximum of 200 people.
 - Attendance limits include all staff and volunteers working at the event.
- Indoor:
 - Attendance limited to a maximum of 100 people. All attendees must show proof of negative test or full vaccination.

Orange

- Outdoor:
 - Attendance limited to a **maximum of 100**.
 - If all attendees show proof of **negative test or full vaccination, then a maximum of 300 people**.
 - Attendance limits include all staff and volunteers working at the event.
- Indoor:
 - Attendance limited to a maximum of 150 people. **All attendees must show proof of negative test or full vaccination**

Yellow

- Outdoor:
 - Attendance limited to a maximum of 200.
 - If all attendees show proof of negative test or full vaccination, then a maximum of 400 people.
 - Attendance limits include all staff and volunteers working at the event.
- Indoor:
 - Attendance limited to a maximum of 200 people. **All attendees must show proof of negative test or full vaccination.**

Tips – How many guests?

- Use an outdoor area.
- Before you tell families how many seats they can have...
 1. Determine the tier-based occupancy limit.
 2. Determine how many seats will fit with physical distancing. (It might be less.)
 - a) Create a seating diagram with measurements to scale.
 - b) Members of the same household can sit without physical distancing so use household seat blocks in your layout.
 3. Count everyone (with two exceptions) including the “graduates.”
 - a) Do not count fully vaccinated employees and those who have tested negative as a part of weekly testing
 4. Determine how many guests per student.

Seating layout maximum (which cannot exceed the tier based limit)

– number of students, and unvaccinated/untested workers

Total number of guests

/ number of students

Guests per student

Considerations for Seating Plans

Household seat blocks:

- Probably easiest to **lay out your seating area in small blocks** that will allow easy assignment for household reservations.
 - For example, if each graduate will be allowed three guests, laying out all seating in three-person blocks will make assigning seats easier.
- The downside is that when a graduate has guests from **more than one household**, they'll need **more than one block**.
- Avoid reservation and seating policies that **limit** attendees to a single household... **many kids have parents who don't live together**.

Consider the diagonal:

- XXX XXX XXX XXX XXX XXX XXX XXX XXX XXX XXX
- XXX XXX XXX XXX XXX XXX XXX XXX XXX XXX XXX

Assigned seats

Assigning seats will be a new challenge for most schools. Create reservation and seat assignments with the following in mind.

- Reservations and **assigned seats are required**. Open seating areas are not allowed.
- Seat selection may be a concern as **some may assert special treatment or bias** had an impact in the process.
 - Consider using a **public/virtual lottery system to assign seats**.
 - Number seats front to back and place the names of all graduates in a container.
 - Draw names and assign seat blocks in the order that they are drawn, from closest to the stage to farthest away.
 - Obtain the household attestation from a parent/guardian when the tickets are picked up from the school.
- **You can't assign seats without a seating layout**.
 - For very small gatherings you **may tag seats with names**.

Pre-event communications

- Number of tickets available per graduate
- Process used for seat assignment and to pickup tickets
- The process use to maintain physical distancing and mask use:
 - Entering, during and after
- How graduates will enter the event while maintaining physical distancing and mask use
- Prohibition on attendance if a person has:
 - fever of 100 degrees or more, or
 - any symptom(s) associated with COVID-19, or
 - any close contact exposure with someone who is contagious with COVID-19
- That row-by-row exiting will be used at the end of the ceremony (recommended)

- Expectations for conduct during the ceremony
 - People must go directly to their assigned seats and remain there for the duration of the ceremony.
 - Masks must be worn and may be removed only while drinking water at your seat.
 - Guests may not change seats or sit in areas that have been left vacant for physical distancing.
 - Guests may not approach the stage to take pictures.
 - Discourage shouting, chanting, and using breath-based noise makers is prohibited as these activities produce and spread large quantities of aerosol particles.

Preparing the Venue for the Event

- **Label sections, rows, and seats** with individual numbers, **or tag seat blocks with family names.**
- Create and **place signage** to assist people in locating their seats quickly.
- Clearly **mark seats and rows that are closed** for physical distancing.
- Create and **place COVID-19 prevention signage** in the languages used by your school community, including:
 - Symptom and exposure checklist at the entrance
 - Mask requirements
 - Physical distancing reminders
 - Limitation that food and beverages be consumed only when seated in your assigned seats
- Create and place **physical distancing markers** in areas where people may need to wait in line.
 - Entrances, exits, restrooms
- If folding chairs are used, **adjacent chairs should be locked together.**
 - If the chairs are not designed to do this, they should be zip tied together.
 - This is required by code. It will also prevent the chairs from being moved around easily (and spoiling your physical distancing precautions).

Pre-Event Crowd Management

- Because all seats must be assigned in advance, **no need to open to guests earlier than necessary** to prevent crowds and mixing.
- **Use multiple entry points as possible.** Assign specific gates based on seat locations.
- **Consider staggering arrival times** to reducing crowds waiting to enter the venue.
 - Provide arrival times based on seat location. Seats farthest from the entrance should arrive first. Those closest to the entrance should arrive last.
- **Check off guest names from the guest list people enter.** This will be important for contact tracing if a COVID-positive is present.
- Place **physical distancing markers** where lines are likely.
- Assign **staff to monitor and enforce** physical distancing and face covers.
- **Assign staff to ensure** that people entering the venue **go directly to their seats.**
- Use PA announcements to **remind guests of the behavior expectations** (see pre-event communications) prior to the start of the ceremony.

Managing the Ceremony

Maintaining physical distancing and the use of masks will present significant challenges during the ceremony.

- **Incorporate reminders on appropriate behavior** (see pre-event communications) into the master of ceremonies' remarks prior to key events in the ceremony.
 - Prior to the graduates processing into the event area
 - Prior to recognizing each graduate on stage
 - Prior to the conclusion of the ceremony
- Staff assigned to enforce COVID-19 expectations should **move to the areas that people will be drawn to before** each of the events listed above.

Post Ceremony Crowd Management

To maintain physical distancing we recommend the following:

- Consider using **row-by-row exiting**, with people seated nearest to the exit leaving the venue first.
- Assign **staff to prevent people from congregating** in the area surrounding the venue.
- If you plan a **reception with food** people must be **seated at assigned seats** while eating and drinking.
 - Food and drinks must be served. No self service.
 - Physical distancing must be maintained.
 - Masks worn unless actively eating/drinking at assigned seat.